

could take the matter up with the Government there. A special Committee might be set up to consider the effects of the plan on our export trade, and propose ways and means of keeping the harm done to it as low as possible. A certain amount of import and export trade with India and the Dominions would have to continue.

The War Cabinet considered the idea on 30th May, 1917, and approved it. Our shipping arrangements were thereupon adapted as far as possible to the plan so approved, and during the extremely difficult and anxious time through which we were passing in the summer and autumn of 1917, these arrangements greatly increased the carrying capacity of our shipping, and helped very considerably to bring us through.

Practical measures of this sort, based upon enlightened common sense and carried out by competent business men, were among the measures adopted to increase the effective capacity of our tonnage and thus neutralise the ravages of the submarines. But they by no measure cover the whole of the plans adopted by the Ministry to make a more businesslike use of our tonnage. In the next chapter I propose to describe other steps they took to economise our sea transport.